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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY China

SUBJECT Reactions in Canton to Stalin's Death/VOA
Reception/Exit Permit Procedures

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1. When the death of Stalin was formally announced over the radio in Canton around 5:30 p.m., thousands of people in the city crowded every restaurant to eat and drink. It was a simultaneous and spontaneous move and appeared like a great big celebration. Those who could not find accommodations in the restaurants rushed to the shops and bought up all the famous Cantonese roast duck and roast pork and celebrated the occasion in their own homes. Ordinarily food stores in Canton are closed very late at night but on the day of Stalin's death, the food stores closed before 7 p.m. because they were sold out.

2. The people in Canton reacted wildly to the news of Stalin's death. Many hoped that it would pave the way for the downfall of Mao Tse-tung's regime. Many people applied for exit permits to go to Hong Kong just to get more news about Stalin's death from the free world. Many were hoping that it would not be long when the Kuomintang government would return to the mainland.

3. There are at least 10,000 radio sets in Canton but only 6,000 are equipped for shortwave reception. The others can only receive locally broadcast news and programs.

4. There is still a lot of red tape in obtaining exit permits in Canton. Persons under the age of 16 seem to have no difficulty. In fact they can get "non-return" permits which enable them to remain away permanently. The first sent in his application to the Communist official in charge of his residential district. The application would then be investigated to ascertain the reasons for leaving Canton. The application then goes to the Public Safety Bureau (Kung An Chu) for final approval. get a business firm to guarantee his return to Canton and those without such guarantees must have two registered residents sign for him. Usually it takes a week or ten days to get a permit.

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